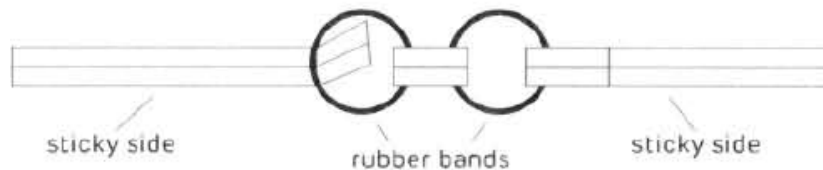


Lip Taping Before Bilateral or Two-Sided Cleft Lip Repair

Sometimes, a cleft of the lip can be made smaller before surgery by using tape and small rubber bands to gently move the edges of the cleft closer together. The skin and muscles of the face in infants are soft and can be molded slowly and gently over weeks or months. This makes the cleft easier to fix with surgery.

HOW TO APPLY THE TAPE AND RUBBER BANDS

You will use three pieces of steri-strips and two rubber bands, like this:



- Start with ¼ -inch steri-strips.
- Put half of a steri-strip through the rubber band and fold it back onto itself.
- From another steri-strip, cut a short piece about 1 inch long. Use this short piece to connect the two rubber bands so they are about ½ inch apart or about the distance of the middle part of your baby's lip.
- Put another half of the steri-strip through the second rubber band, making sure the sticky side of the taped is facing the same direction as the first piece of tape. Fold the end back onto itself.
- Put one end of the tape on one cheek. Gently squeeze the cheeks together and pull the tape across, stretching the rubber bands to twice their size. Stick the other end of the tape on the other cheek.

You should see small creases between the nose and the cheeks, but these won't be permanent. The rubber bands should be across the gaps in the lip, and the middle tape should be on the middle part of the upper lip.).

Use the tape 24 hours a day. You can feed your baby with the tapes in place. Change the tapes when they get loose or are falling off. Tapes should be changed at least once a day.

If your baby's cheeks get red or irritated, leave the tapes off for several hours, and gently wash their face with water to get rid of any adhesive that stays on the face. If the redness or irritation doesn't get better, please call the Plastic Surgery office at 720-777-6409 or the Cleft office at 720-777-2574. We may recommend that you put some protective covering on your baby's cheeks.

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Author: Cleft and Craniofacial | Approved by Patient Education Committee | Valid through 2023

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